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COMMANDER AT BUNKER HILL?

WITH REMARKS ON

FROTHINGHAM'S HISTORY OF THE BATTLE.

With an Appendix.

BY S. SWETT.

BOSTON:
PRINTED BY JOHN WILSON,
21, School Street.
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COMMAND AT BUNKER HILL.

THIRTY-TWO years since, though without any pretensions to be an author, we consented to write an account of Bunker Hill Battle, as a feeble contribution to the monument of fame that history owed our ancestors. But, we find, one may be be an author in spite of himself; we have been compelled to address the public repeatedly in defence of our history, though never before with so great reluctance. By this time we hoped to enjoy the privilege of age, to exempt us from this task; and, notwithstanding our friendly regards for Mr. Frothingham, and a high appreciation of his book for its intentional honor and honesty and successful research, we shall be obliged to notice at least one of his mistakes. For he is under the same ban as all our race: "to err is human." And were his mistake solitary, it would compensate for that by its magnitude, nay, its sublimity. According to him, the great Battle of Bunker Hill was fought, on our side, by a headless mob; and, to prove this, he adduces the most incontrovertible argument in the world, were it true, — that the army at Cambridge, which had been for two months collecting and organizing under the able and experienced Gen. Ward, assisted by a host of accomplished veteran officers, was itself a mob. He terms it, by a new-invented name, "an army of allies;" a misnomer, calculated to mislead his readers in regard to its organization. On the files of the

Provincial Congress, and by the Committee of Safety, it is termed the New England army; and, in the gazettes of the day, the American army. Gen. Putnam, he says, would have been the commander in the battle, had the army been "regularly organized;" but, because "it had not yielded to the vital principle of subordination," he was present as a patriotic volunteer. He has treated Gen. Putnam's character with the utmost candor and kindness, as animals destined for the altar are pampered, to be sacrificed at last.

It will be our duty to enter into a thorough investigation of this subject of the command, though with great repugnance, on account of its involving the rival claims of Putnam and Prescott. For both those heroes we entertain the most devoted admiration, and the deepest interest in their fame. Could we have imagined that any such discordant claims might be advanced, our history had never been commenced. In our numerous conversations with Judge Prescott on the subject, we never discovered their existence until our history was published. He had presented to the Athenæum Gen. Heath's Memoirs, as a declaration, we presumed, that the statements in them relative to his father were correct; and to Heath's opinions we subscribed. We have contented ourselves heretofore with a simple statement of the facts that were known relative to the command; but an historian is bound to state the principles, as well as the facts, relative to the characters he introduces, and the legitimate conclusions resulting from those facts and principles, as much as a counsellor is bound to do so for his client.

The author, in robbing Putnam of the command, "not enriches" Prescott, nor any one else. He does not intimate the possibility that Prescott may have been the commander of the battle: so far from it, he emphatically denies that he issued any order whatsoever on Bunker Hill, or at the rail-fence; and states that he was one of the junior colonels in the army, that Col. Frye was an older officer and in the battle; whilst he does not pretend that Prescott exercised, or had a right to exercise, any command over him, or over other colonels who were in the battle, and older officers than

himself. He attributes to Prescott nothing more than a colonel's command over his detachment, which, by some unaccountable mistake, he computes at twelve hundred, whilst it is limited at one thousand by Col. Prescott himself, and all reliable authorities. He states that Prescott held councils of war; but he ought to have added, that this was not at any time whilst Gen. Putnam was in Charlestown; and that they were confined to the junior officers of his detachment. He confines him during the battle to the redoubt; and he might have added that it was impossible for him to have exercised any command through the line, because he was on foot; though he does add one fact which is exceedingly important, — that Prescott had but one hundred and fifty men left under his command at the redoubt,* during the battle, as is stated by the colonel himself, and others who were with him; and, in conclusion, he observes, that Prescott was left in the redoubt, during the battle, without the slightest interference, control, or command from Gen. Putnam or any one else. Now, there never was, and never will be, any one to question or deny one tittle of these statements relative to Prescott; we subscribe to them implicitly.

But the author has labored, throughout a large portion of his book, to prove the most insignificant abstraction that ever entered visionary's imagination, — that Gen. Putnam possessed no right to command Col. Prescott. Grant it; and it would not add one leaf to the laurels of Prescott, nor a single ray to the splendor of his fame. Nor, on the other hand, would Putnam lose by the concession. Grant to Putnam the command of all the rest of the battle, and all that is thus demanded for Prescott would constitute so insignificant an exception, as merely to illustrate the proverb, that the general rule is proved by the exception.

Mr. Frothingham says nothing of any command at the breastwork, though, by describing it as reaching down to the slough, he has represented it as longer than it was, and has marred and obscured by this mistake one of the principal

* The regular number to line the front of the redoubt would be 132.

features of the battle. The breastwork did not reach down to the slough by six or seven rods; which space was nearly or quite unprotected, as was the farther space of 190 yards between the breastwork and rail-fence, except by the slough, that did not reach back to the rail-fence by 80 yards. Now, this was the weak point and key to the American position, which the enemy were grossly culpable for not discovering, through their previous reconnoissances and knowledge of the ground. We did not discover, till we had written thus far, that the author had our own authority for his mistake, or rather our printer's. In our map of the battle, we have represented the fact correctly; but in our text it stands, that the breastwork ran "to" instead of "toward" the slough.

Taking for granted all the author says of Prescott, we should pass over the authorities he has accumulated concerning him, were it not that, left unexplained as they are by him, they may mislead his readers into the belief, that Prescott had command, not only of his detachment, but of the battle. We will go through the list. The report of the Committee of Safety says, "The commander of the party gave orders to retreat from the redoubt;" and one of the writers of the the report is supposed to have called Prescott "the commander of the provincials." That is, Prescott commanded the *party*, the *provincials*, who raised the redoubt, and those of them who fought there under him, till he gave them orders to retreat. The author denies that he commanded any others: "Gen. Ward, in his letter to President Adams, 30th Oct. '75, says that Bunker Hill Battle was conducted by a Massachusetts officer." Ward was endeavoring to make out a strong case for the Massachusetts against the Southern officers. As he knew it was physically impossible for Prescott to have conducted the battle, because he was on foot, and militarily so, because there were generals and other officers older than Prescott on the field, he must have intended to designate himself or Warren as the conductor of the battle. Possibly he intended to claim the honor himself. The first syllable of the word "conducted" has been altered by the pen: he began perhaps to write the word "com-

manded;" but, recollecting that he could not claim the command, altered it into "conducted." And he was authorized to claim to have been the conductor of the battle, and to have conducted it with great skill and discretion.

Mr. Frothingham thinks, that, "in a military point of view, it would be difficult to assign a just motive to either party for this conflict." We place in our Appendix the declaration of the proscribed patriot Adams on the subject, which will justify Gen. Ward, and satisfy every one on this point.

But, notwithstanding Gen. Ward's use of the word "conducted," he probably intended to say that Warren was the conductor or commander of Bunker Hill Battle, knowing that he was on the field, vested with all the rights and authority of a major-general; — which was literally true, notwithstanding Frothingham's mistake in supposing that Warren told Prescott, as a reason for not assuming the command, that he had not received his commission. This is a mistake of fact and law: Warren, according to Gen. Heath, said not one word about his commission, and his want of one did not diminish his rights of office; a point that has been settled by the Supreme Court of the United States. It was not so extraordinary for Ward to call Warren the commander, as for Gen. Humphreys to do so in his life of Putnam, whose Aid he had been. Both, doubtless, were ignorant of the fact, that Warren refused to exercise any command on the occasion. It was not generally known till published by Gen. Heath, twenty years after the battle. Martin the chaplain, who was present the night before and during the battle, says, "The Americans took possession of the hill under Prescott." This is taken by Frothingham from Stiles's Diary; and the reason why Stiles does not quote Martin as saying they were under Putnam likewise is, doubtless, because he had just before entered the same fact in his diary from the all-sufficient authority of Gen. Green. Martin says, that he urged Prescott in vain to send for Putnam and a reinforcement; that Prescott and he differed, even to quarrel, about the reinforcements; and that he ordered one of the men off himself to Gen. Ward, which brought Gen.

Putnam and a large reinforcement about noon. "Gordon says one thousand men under Prescott intrenched; Gen. Putnam is busily engaged in aiding and encouraging here and there as the case requires." "Dr. Thatcher says, Prescott headed the detachment, and retained the command," that is, the command of it. Frothingham says this is unequivocal in favor of Prescott. Instead of that, Thatcher is unequivocal in favor of Putnam's command, by placing him at the head of all the officers, in the following words: — "Generals Putnam, Warren, Pomeroy, and Col. Prescott were emphatically the heroes of the day." "Pitts says, it appears to me there never was more confusion and less command; no one seemed to have any but Col. Prescott." "Gen. Heath says, Prescott was the proper commanding officer in the redoubt." And Heath says, and Frothingham in another place quotes it as an instance of a collision between Putnam and Prescott, that Putnam rode up to the redoubt, and told Col. Prescott that the intrenching tools must be sent off; and that Col. Prescott, though he remonstrated against it, obeyed the order. Gen. Lee, in his memoirs of the war in the Southern States, has what is called an *obiter dictum*, a few words foreign to his subject, in which he remarks that Gen. Howe found his enemy posted on Breed's Hill, "commanded by Col. Prescott." The author gives no explanation of Lee's words, nor does he claim that they mean any thing more than Prescott's command of his detachment and the redoubt on Breed's Hill. Lee quotes no authority, and was no authority himself. He knew nothing about the battle. His ignorance was so gross, that he says the Americans had no artillery. Lee states, however, that Prescott received no promotion in the army of the United Colonies. It is impossible, then, that he could have been the commander of the battle. Judge Tudor throws no light on the subject: he says, "There was no authorized commander; Col. Prescott appeared to have been the chief;" "the whole business appeared to have been conducted without order, or regular command." Our author adds the words of Col. Prescott's son: "Neither Gen. Putnam nor

any other officer ever exercised or claimed any authority or command over Col. Prescott, or the detachment, before or in the battle." It follows not that they had no right to do so. The author attributes to Col. Scammans an anonymous note in a newspaper, written perhaps by the editor, saying, "As there was no general officer who commanded on Bunker Hill, was it not Whitcomb's duty to have been there?" This probably meant early in the day when Scammans met Whitcomb, and Putnam was not on the hill. But the author omits to mention here, that in the same paper it appears from witnesses under oath, and not denied, that Scammans, during the battle, sent to Gen. Putnam, at Bunker Hill, to see if he was wanted, and that his regiment went to the top of Bunker Hill; "after which Gen. Putnam came up, and ordered the regiment to advance within hearing of Col. Scammans."* We have gone through Mr. Frothingham's list of authorities; and in the whole of them there is not the shadow of an excuse for his conclusion, "that no general officer was authorized to command over Prescott during the battle." But, if these authorities were trumpet-tongued in support of his conclusion, it would remain one of those things which no evidence can prove. The author is dealing with hard characters: Ward, Warren, Putnam, and Prescott, are not rag babies, that an historian may bend and distort according to his fancy. The whole kingdom of Great Britain could not bend one of them. Yet, if this story be true, Ward, a stickler for the authority and dignity of officers according to their rank, imposed on Warren and Putnam the insulting restriction of fighting the battle, shorn of half their authority and command; and these high-spirited and gallant heroes submitted to so ignominious a condition. Still worse;

* The author's mode of stating evidence, by this extract of a note out of a whole trial, equals the clergyman who fulminated the following text against the flaunting top-knots our foremothers wore on their heads:— "Top-knot, come down," leaving out the other words of "Let him on the house-top not come down." Colman, in his "Broad Grins," describes a very large man as three single gentlemen rolled into one: our author has contrived to roll up most of Scammans's officers, who testify in his case, into a single witness. Page 164.

they no sooner arrive on the field than they deny their own agreement. Warren, in a shuffling answer to Prescott, implies his right to the command, and makes a merit of foregoing it in favor of so distinguished a veteran; while Putnam not only disavows his agreement, but has the atrocious folly to attempt to bully such an officer as Prescott out of his command, who obeys him, however, without daring to assert his rights. This is certainly very strange history; but, unless every word of it is true, the author's conclusion must be false. The author has taken no notice of Gen. Dearborn's declaration of Col. Prescott's conversation with him on this subject. Dearborn states expressly, that he was informed by Prescott that he sent to Putnam to come forward and exercise the command, as he could not do so for want of rank; confessing thus that Putnam, while on the field, was fully entitled to be the commander. All the world knows that he did come forward and exercise the command most effectually, from the beginning to the end of the engagement.

There may be some unwilling to believe that the opinion of Mr. Frothingham is entitled to no weight; but he, as well as myself, are writing on a subject technical and professional, belonging to the art of war, concerning which both of us confess we know little or nothing. He seems unable to distinguish between a separate and an independent command. Were he writing on chemistry, he might perhaps exclaim, of a well-known fact, as he does about Putnam and Prescott, "It is impossible that two white things put together should make a black one;" or in astronomy, that it is quite impossible the earth should have any movement of its own, while it was under control of Jupiter and the Sun.

We have made the supposition of the author's fundamental error being solitary; but errors, like misfortunes, never come alone. The lost traveller, who wanders from the right road, enters on a boundless field of aberration, and at every step plunges deeper into a chaos of mistakes.

To prove that Putnam was not the commander, the author alleges that, in some cases, he was not obeyed as such. Now, we say with the utmost confidence, that, any few cases

of cowardice out of the question, no military despot ever was obeyed with more implicit subjection than Putnam was, throughout the battle, by every one, officers or men, from their enthusiastic love and admiration of him, and boundless confidence in him, as a great, experienced, and fortunate hero and patriot.

The first case he imagines to have been an instance of disobedience is that of Col. Sargent, whom he charges with disobeying Gen. Putnam's order for him to go on to Bunker Hill.* This injustice to the reputations of Putnam and Sargent arises from the most inconceivable misconstruction of Col. Sargent's letter to us, the only document on the subject. Col. Paul Dudley Sargent refuse to go on to Bunker Hill, or any other battle-ground! He was one of the greatest fire-eaters of the revolutionary army. Gen. Washington observed, that, in all his councils of war, whenever he proposed any measure which his other officers thought too desperate to be undertaken, Sargent always voted for its execution.† Had the author ever heard of the man, or made the slightest inquiry among his relatives in Boston, he would never have imagined the possibility of such an imputation. Had Putnam ordered him on to Sinai's hill, with all its fires, he would not have hesitated, had there been fighting there.

Whilst Col. Sargent was at Cambridge, his regiment, and that of Connecticut, were stationed under the immediate command of Putnam at Inman's farm, the most exposed and important post of the army, near which place the enemy had landed at the time of Lexington Battle. During the Battle of Bunker Hill, both these regiments were like "greyhounds on the slip," earnestly entreating of Gen. Ward for permission to join in the conflict. But, apprehending the enemy would land at the same place again to assail him, he would not grant them permission, until it was too late for Col. Sargent to participate in the battle. When he arrived at Charlestown, the battle was over; our troops had retreated; and Sargent found Putnam, with all he could rally, on top

* Page 168. Note 1. † Hon. Daniel Sargent.

of Prospect Hill, where, in hot haste, he was throwing up intrenchments, often laying some of the sods himself to encourage his men. The day after the battle, he observed that for three days he had neither washed nor changed his clothes. But, though the battle was over, Sargent could not deny himself the satisfaction of scenting the British Lion. He lingered under the enemy's cannonade till every one of his men had run away, and he himself was wounded, when he returned to Cambridge. Putnam, in defiance of Ward's orders, who, notwithstanding his urgency, had always refused him permission, was fortifying Prospect Hill, and sent repeatedly for Sargent to join him, which he declined; but why he does not intimate. He might have exposed himself to a court-martial by a compliance. These are all the facts the author has for the assertion, that Sargent disobeyed Putnam's order to go on to Bunker Hill. It is simply and palpably impossible that any such order should have been given or disobeyed. (For more of Sargent, see Appendix.)

The only other instance in the author's book of Putnam's being disobeyed, to make good his allegation that such cases existed, is that of Capt. Callender of the Artillery. If any thing could be more wonderful than the author's mistaking one hill for another, when both have been before his eyes from his birth, it would be his adducing this case as one of disobedience, or a case of any kind to disprove that Putnam was the commander. And it is quite as extraordinary that he should refer to a newspaper for the facts in Callender's case, when he had before him a complete statement of them in the report of a committee to the Massachusetts Congress; a report from which he has extracted only five words, saying that Putnam ordered Callender to go back, though it is so important in a description of the battle, and especially for the fame of Gen. Putnam, that any historian who neglects it commits a most unfortunate mistake. This committee say, "We applied to Gen. Putnam and other officers, who were in the heat of the engagement, for further intelligence. Gen. Putnam informed us, that, in the late action, as he was riding up Bunker Hill, he met an officer in the

train, drawing his cannon down in great haste; he ordered the officer to stop and go back; he replied, he had no cartridges; the general dismounted, and examined his boxes, and found a considerable number of cartridges, upon which he ordered him back; he refused until the general threatened him with immediate death; upon which he returned up the hill again, but soon deserted his post, and left the cannon." Now, this is the strongest case imaginable, not of disobedience, but compulsory obedience. Callender obeyed Putnam to the letter, as the committee say; he deserted his post afterwards. And we ask the author whether this conduct of Putnam was that of a volunteer. But allow the author to make his own case regardless of facts.* Suppose Callender disobeyed Putnam, and that it was for this he was condemned, instead of cowardice only, as he was, this imaginary case would be worse than the real one for the author and his argument; it would give us the sentence of the court-martial to prove that Putnam was his commander. As if purposely to declare he did not think any thing relative to Putnam deserving of ordinary care or attention, he says, "This report states Callender was riding down the hill," when there is not a syllable of the kind. The author has racked his fancy to discover other objections to Putnam's having the command, that are as groundless as the foregoing. He objects, that, if Putnam had been the commander, he would have boasted of it in his letter to the town of Cambridge, in which he claims the merit of having saved that place from the incursion of the enemy, after the battle, by erecting fortifications on Prospect Hill. In the first place, the argument proves too much: it would prove that he was not the commander in the battle at Chelsea; for he does not mention that in his letter; and he had more reason to

* The author's declaration, that Callender was tried for disobedience, 27th June, seems to be a poetic license. Ward orders the court-martial at that time, without the slightest intimation of such a charge. Fearing our readers' incredulity, we have omitted hitherto another of our author's mistakes: he sometimes, like St. Patrick, carries his head under his arm, instead of wearing it on his shoulders.

boast of that, than of Bunker Hill Battle, to the people of Cambridge, who would have thanked him for nothing in regard to the latter. It was he who, with Prescott, had urged on that battle for the good of the country, but at the imminent risk of Cambridge, and brought on them the very danger to which he alluded. But he had a better reason for not mentioning either of those battles. He was not a braggadocio. The author's next objection is, that Putnam did not at the time publicly claim to have been the commander. Putnam claim the honor of the command, when all the world at that time agreed in attributing it to the martyred Warren! "Putnam's generosity was singular;" "he was generous almost to a fault." Was he the man to pluck from the bloody brow of Warren the crown of honor, for the nominal command of Bunker Hill Battle? — from Warren, whom he adored as a patriot, and loved as a friend and brother; who had just stood by his side at the cannon's mouth at Chelsea and Bunker Hill? In the bosom of his family, he declared the bare idea was abhorrent to him. In that sanctuary, however, he did not hesitate to declare that he was the commander.

The author represents President Stiles as stating, in his Diary, 20th June, as one among various rumors from camp, that Gen. Putnam took possession of the hill the night before the battle; and that Stiles, on 23d June, after receiving additional information from those who had seen Gen. Putnam, enters in his Diary "that Putnam was not on the hill at the beginning." The author has no right to introduce the second entry to contradict the first, because he knows that, if it does so, it is false; for he has stated himself that Putnam was present at the beginning of the intrenchment. For the same reason he cannot adduce it to prove Putnam was not present at the beginning of the battle. But there is no contradiction between these entries: both of them are true. President Stiles was not a man to contradict himself; his meaning is perfectly clear; he is speaking of the 17th June, and says Putnam was not present at the beginning, that is, the beginning of the contest by the enemy's cannonade at

daylight. But who would imagine, that, instead of any rumors, as the author calls them, on which Stiles makes his first entry, Stiles says not one syllable of any rumor? So far from it, he states expressly and distinctly that William Ellery, the leading man of Rhode Island, and well-known signer of the Declaration of Independence, had just shown him a copy of a letter from Gen. Greene at Roxbury, second to no one in the army except Washington, and a copy of another letter from the Committee of Supplies [of R. Island at Roxbury]; and that Gen. Greene said, Gen. Putnam took possession and intrenched on Bunker Hill, Friday night, 16th inst.; "and that Gen. Ward said, the enemy's loss was three times as great as ours." "Greene," Styles says, "seemed to doubt this at first; but, from after-inquiry, and considering that Putnam fired from the trenches, and that it was said the dead of the enemy covered an acre of ground, Gen. Greene seemed rather to credit the estimate." The Chamber of Supplies says, "The king's troops attacked Gen. Putnam, who defended himself with bravery, till overpowered and obliged to retreat." Now, these accounts alone settle the whole question of Putnam's command for ever. Instead of being base metal to be stigmatized as rumors, they are sterling gold, and stamped at the highest mint in America.

We have gone through the objections of the author to Putnam's claims, as we did through his positions in favor of Prescott's, and demonstrated them all to be groundless. We repeat that we have done this with the greatest repugnance, not only from our personal respect for the author, but because we may be suspected of doing so from rivalry. But the author will bear us witness, that we did all in our power beforehand to render his history as perfect and correct as possible, for the very purpose of avoiding the necessity of writing again on the subject. Whence his invincible prepossession against Putnam's claims it is useless to inquire; but he acknowledges the assistance of a number of gentlemen, who, as well as he and myself, belong to Massachusetts; and we must all acknowledge our natural and instinctive preference

and partiality in favor of an officer of our own Commonwealth. This is fearful odds against Putnam; but, in his long warfare for his country, he came off triumphant in many a desperate conflict while living; and his hard-earned reputation may suffice to gain him one victory more, though he is dead. In the fable of the lion painted by man, the lion complains that man is the painter instead of himself. Putnam, the lion of Connecticut, might well complain that we men of Massachusetts are drawing a picture of him in Bunker Hill Battle. But happily for the moral of that fable, three other lions of Connecticut, Stiles, Dwight, and Whitney, have done the same; and their picture of him is much more life-like than Frothingham's.

We are delighted to discover, at last, something amusing in one of the author's mistakes, to relieve this dry and dolorous discussion. He says, Putnam had the command of a regiment, because he was complimented with the empty title of colonel of a particular regiment, or rather the regiment was complimented by bearing the name of the nominal colonel according to the etiquette and fashion of that day. But this gave the nominal colonel no more right of command over it, than my signing myself the author's humble servant gives him a right to call on me for menial service. The regiment, in these cases, had a full compliment of officers in command, exclusive of the nominal colonel. The King of Prussia paid the same compliment to the King of France, by making him a colonel of one of his regiments; and even the Virgin Mary was appointed by Louis XI. the colonel of a regiment.

We are at a loss to account for the author's hallucination: perhaps, being an antiquarian, he has adopted the odd notion of our ancestors, that some men are born for perdition, whose good deeds are filthy rags, and all efforts to save them useless; in fact, that Putnam was one of those culprits described in our common-law code as outlaws, who wear wolves' heads, "*caput lupinum*," and whose brains it is the duty of every one to beat out. He seems to imagine, that the head of the wolf Putnam slew in the cavern may by

some legerdemain have been transferred to his shoulders; and it must be acknowledged there are some who appear to be of that opinion.

Putnam was a large, strong, muscular man, with an open, bold, determined countenance, and a large head, with full broad forehead and brain, proclaiming prodigious power and energy of mind to govern and direct, and passion to impel. As a farmer-boy, born and brought up in Essex, Massachusetts, one of the most enlightened counties in America, he must have partaken of the universal cultivation around him, though his schooling was confined to a few winter weeks annually. Before the Revolution, he had been many years in the army, in continual desperate battle on the continent and in the West Indies, and fought his way up from captain to a colonelcy. For particular accounts of him, we refer to the biographies, eulogies, and histories that mention him. Frothingham has given us the flattering eulogies on him by Gen. Reed, than whom a more intelligent officer was not under Washington. The late eminent scholar, John Pickering, sent us an eulogy upon him, from the English Annual Register, which he thought was written by the great Edmund Burke. Gen. Dearborn says, "The universal popularity of Putnam at the commencement of the Revolution was such as can scarcely *now* be conceived, even by those who *then* felt the whole force of it." Gen. Burbeck says, "He was the great gun of the day." President Dwight, and no one knew him better, says he was "a man whose generosity was singular, whose honesty was proverbial; a hero who dared to lead where any dared to follow." But Washington has stamped on Putnam the fiat of fame. The first moment he met him on Prospect Hill, he paid him a flattering compliment, "that he inspired every man under him with his own energy and spirit;" and he pronounced various eulogies on him up to the moment of bidding him his last farewell. Their mutual confidence and friendship were uninterrupted, except for an instant, when Washington thought Putnam was desirous of doing more than his share of the fighting. Washington called for part of the troops of Putnam, who

waited to entreat permission to head them first against New York, as he had before against Boston. Washington, though his military sternness was as gigantic as all his other good qualities, rebuked him with more forbearance than he ever exhibited on a similar occasion. He was more severe on Hamilton for a slight want of punctuality, when he said to him, "You must change your watch, or I must change my Aid." *

But the appointment of Putnam as Brigadier-General by Connecticut, and Major-General by the Federal Congress, over the heads of many most respectable officers, would prove, without any of these notices, that no other officer could have been selected as the commander of the battle, as he had been on three very conspicuous occasions before. If commander there was, he must have been the commander; and "that there was, all nature cries aloud." Since the world began, in all history or natural history, there never was a battle known without a commander. It is the instinct of all animated nature, insect, animal, or man; from the bee to the buffalo, from the Indian savage to Gen. Taylor. Milton's battles of the angels were fought under Michael and Satan as the commanders.

Our next incontrovertible proof that Putnam was the commander is founded on the fact, that the army at Cambridge was regularly organized and consolidated under Ward, Warren, Putnam, and other officers in regular gradation, without any distinction in regard to the colonies whence the troops came. The author acknowledges, if this was the fact, that Putnam was the commander; we take him at his word, and will make this so clear, that he who runs may read. The question is one of fact only, as regards both the army and Gen. Putnam; whether the army was, in fact, a consolidated and organized body, and whether Putnam was commander of the battle *de facto*. Whether all this was technically legal and constitutional is a question as abstract and useless as that other of the author's, whether Putnam

* For an interesting description of Putnam, see Appendix.

had any right to command Prescott; and more hopeless: it is almost on a par with that of free agency, or the origin of evil. It would be as preposterous to deny that Putnam was the commander, even if the army was not a legal one, as for British historians to have denied that Washington was the commander in the battles he fought, because they said he was not a legal commander, and Gen. Howe said he was no General, only Mr. &c.; though he found to his sorrow, that Washington and Putnam both were generals, and out-generalled him, — Putnam at Bunker Hill, and Washington ever afterwards. There is poor encouragement for any one to enter into this question of the legality of the organization of the army, when Pres. Adams, sen. and Judge Tudor failed under it so egregiously. They both jumped into this quickset hedge, and the author shuts his eyes and follows them. The result is, Pres. Adams doubts whether any one was authorized to command the troops of all the colonies; and whether any one, except the old militia Gen. Pomeroy, a volunteer with no command over an individual in Cambridge, had a right to command the troops of Massachusetts. Judge Tudor doubts with him. The author is positive that the army was one of allies only, and Putnam a mere volunteer. Putnam was no more a volunteer than the whole army at Cambridge was a volunteer army, or than the governments of the colonies who sent the troops there were volunteer governments; and they were in fact mere governments *de facto*, without constitutions, or conventions to form any. New Hampshire, rather the worst off in this respect, had two separate governments, — the royal, under the very popular and conciliatory Gov. Wentworth; and the rebel, under a convention; and both were in operation for a month after the battle. But just as much legality and constitutionality as there was in these governments, so much there was in the consolidation and organization of the army under Gen. Ward. The facts were perfectly well known to all three of the colonies, and their tacit consent and approbation was as binding on them as if it was expressed by their regular enactments enrolled and recorded.

The author omits, in his extracts from Adams's letter, far the most interesting and important part of it, as it regards the subject, and especially Putnam's claims. Adams thinks his objections to the legality of the army extend to it, and to Washington, when he took command. Now, this fortunately gives us the conclusive authority of Washington, to show that all these legal subtleties are of no practical importance. Adams doubts whether the army was sufficiently organized to authorize Washington to try by courts-martial the delinquents in the battle. But Washington did not hesitate a moment to cut this Gordian knot. He brought Mansfield, Gerrish, Scammans, and all other delinquents, before courts-martial; and made Gen. Greene, of Rhode Island, the president of them, as if for the express purpose of declaring his opinion, that this colonial question did not affect in the slightest degree the organization of the army, or the authority and liabilities of the officers. Our author labors to make out an argument against Putnam's command, by showing that there was more legality and intimacy in the connection of the New Hampshire troops with the rest of the army, than in that of the troops from Connecticut. So complete was the union of the Connecticut troops with the rest of the army, that Putnam could not obtain Ward's permission to take the Connecticut regiment to Charlestown the night before the battle, though he strenuously urged it. The most he could obtain was two hundred of them; and they were placed under the command of Prescott, who had likewise a company from New Hampshire (Capt. Dow's) under his command. Could any thing be more conclusive as to the consolidation of the army? We have the pay-rolls of New Hampshire to prove, that her troops were adopted and paid by her from the first moment they went to Cambridge. On the side of Connecticut this union was not only expressed by the manner in which their officers were detailed for duty by Ward; but he placed under the immediate command of Putnam, Patterson's Massachusetts and Sargent's New Hampshire regiments, in addition to one from Connecticut, at Inman's Farm,

the most exposed and important outpost of the army.* And the very important action was fought, and the victory achieved, under the command of Putnam, the 27th of May, at Chelsea. On the 13th May, all the troops at Cambridge marched under the command of Putnam to Charlestown, and defied the enemy under the very muzzles of their guns. Lieut.-Col. Huntington writes to Gov. Trumbull from Cambridge, 27th April: "Gen. Ward being at Roxbury, Gen. Putnam is commander-in-chief at this place." Now, how is it conceivable, that the author, after narrating these three striking cases of Putnam's command over all the troops, and after this overwhelming evidence of the complete coalescence of these troops, should a few days after, when Putnam appears again with the army at Bunker Hill, turn to the right about face, like lightning, and deny that he could possibly command, because it was an army of allies?

The organization of the army at Cambridge, just before the battle, was as follows: Two full regiments, under Stark and Reid, and another small one under Sargent, from New Hampshire, and one full regiment from Connecticut under Lieut.-Col. Storrs, immediately after the battle of Lexington, about two months before that of Bunker Hill, came to Cambridge, and voluntarily united themselves with the army under Major-Gen. Ward. All these troops previous to the battle, as we stated in our history of it, in the very words, we believe, of Gov. Brooks (Maj. Brooks, of Ward's army), were regularly organized and consolidated, and the routine and operations of a regular army were performed by them precisely as though they had been all of one province. The following extracts from Gen. Ward's orderly book will put this beyond dispute: — April 22, he orders Col. Stark to march to Chelsea with three hundred men. May 2, he orders Maj. M'Clary, of the same regiment, to keep a vigilant look-out as far as Winter Hill. June 6, Lieut.-Col. Storrs is officer of the main guard. June 7, Maj. Durkee officer of the picquet guard. Similar appointments of the

* Col. Putnam's Letter.

Connecticut troops are made repeatedly; and, on the 12th of June, Ward orders a court-martial with Col. Frye, president, and other officers of Massachusetts, united with Coit and Keyes, and Jos. Trumbull, judge advocate, all of Connecticut. Here, then, we have a demonstration, as clear as were it mathematical, of the complete union and coalition of the whole army, not only with their own consent, but with the sanction and approbation of their several provinces, to whom all this was known. But allow the gentleman, as in regard to Callender, to manufacture his own case, grossly regardless of all known facts. Allow that these New England provinces, who had always lived like brothers under one general government, should, when their object, danger, and enemy were one, be so discordant and repulsive, that each provincial corps, even in battle, must be insulated, he would not be one step nearer to his object. Is it possible he is ignorant that allies, as he calls them, when in military detachments, must be under the command of the oldest allied officer, who ranks the rest? This is so perfectly settled, that it would be burning daylight to prove it.

We have thus proved a second time, from the nature of the army, and the rank of Putnam, according to the author's own acknowledgment, that Putnam was the commander of the battle. We now proceed to prove it a third and fourth time, by his conduct in the battle, and the evidence in the case. Our troops were well fed at Cambridge, through contributions from the New England towns, who thought, with the old general, that men fought best on full stomachs: but, after waiting two months, they grew impatient for fighting; and Putnam's whole soul was with them. Notwithstanding Ward's prudence, Putnam persuaded him at last to grant him two thousand men to meet the enemy. The heights of Charlestown were carefully reconnoitred by Putnam, fascines and empty casks were prepared for intrenchments, and all the intrenching tools far and near were collected; but enough only could be found for one thousand men, and Prescott's detachment was limited to that number from necessity; but they were to be relieved

in the morning by an equal number in their places. The still more important preparation of gunpowder was anxiously attempted, though nearly in vain. During the turmoil of the day of battle, Putnam called on the Committee of Safety to receipt for eighteen barrels of powder from Connecticut. He went on to Breed's Hill the night before the battle, and assisted in laying out the intrenchments.* He likewise took his small soldiers' tent on to the ground, and Capt. Trevett says it was erected. This shows a "foregone conclusion," that he was to be indissolubly connected with the expedition, and all its consequences. But, what was still more in the spirit of the man, he prepared for himself a relay of horses for the battle; and nothing more difficult: even Col. Prescott could not find one for Maj. Brooks to ride to Cambridge, though he endeavored to press one from the artillery. Putnam was the only officer mounted in the battle, unless Maj. Durkee was part of the time, as one of the documents relates. Durkee had been his intimate associate in the previous war, as he was through that of the Revolution. By daylight on the morning of the battle, Putnam sent to Gen. Ward for a horse, and procured another himself; he seemed to consider this as important as Richard did, when he exclaims, "My kingdom for a horse." He went to Breed's Hill the night before the battle; and this he did under the express agreement with Gen. Ward that he was to do so, and to have the direction and superintendence of the whole expedition. For the minute detail of Putnam's conduct relative to the battle and connection with it, we refer to our history and notes. The well-known, honorable, and intelligent Col. Putnam, son of the general, who observes he was with the army at the time of the battle, and afterwards an officer under his father till near the close of the war, and during his whole life frequently conversed on the subject of the battle with his father and all others, wrote a memoir, which he communicated to the Monu-

* Frothingham says there was another anonymous general there. No other army general was there; and, if a militia one was, though of no importance, we should have heard of it, from some one of the mass of witnesses who were present.

ment Association. Putnam, he says, early urged Ward to have the heights of Charlestown fortified, who, with Warren, objected the want of powder and battering cannon. Ward hoped for peace and reconciliation with the enemy, and wished to continue on the defensive. Putnam said we should gain peace only by the sword, and he wished only to draw out the enemy so as to meet them on equal terms. He frequently reconnoitred the heights; and, just before the battle, Ward agreed to put two thousand men under him to form intrenchments and defend them. General Putnam went with half this force to Breed's Hill the night of the 16th, repairing at dawn to Cambridge for the other thousand to relieve the fatigue-party; but the cannonade of the enemy called him instantly back. Gov. Brooks went on to the ground with Gen. Putnam, and was present whilst he assisted in laying out the works. Col. Trumbull, with the army at the time, says the detachment went under the command of Gen. Putnam and Col. Prescott. Judge Grosvenor, an officer of the army at the time, and in the detachment, says "Putnam was with them; and, under his immediate superintendence, ground was broken and the redoubt formed; and that he commanded the troops engaged afterwards." Pres. Stiles, of New Haven College, recorded in his Diary, that Putnam took possession of Bunker Hill the night of the 16th. Pres. Dwight, of the same college, says Putnam was the commander of the battle. Rev. Dr. Whitney, the pastor and most intimate friend of Gen. Putnam, states explicitly Gen. Putnam's own declaration to him, that the detachment was at first put under his command, and that with it he took possession of the hill, and ordered the battle from the beginning to the end. "These facts," he says, "Gen. Putnam himself gave me soon after the battle, and also repeated them to me after his life [by Humphreys] was printed." This is in a note of Dr. Whitney to his funeral discourse on Gen. Putnam, 1790, and repeated in his letter, 1818. Col. Putnam, in his letter to me, confirms Dr. Whitney's declarations as to his father's assertions. Frothingham thinks they may have mistaken the

general's meaning. Col. Putnam's reasons for his accurate recollections, we have given. Dr. Whitney says, "Soon after Bunker Hill Battle, I was at Cambridge some weeks chaplain to Gen. Putnam's regiment, resided in his family, and had peculiarly favorable opportunities of learning, from him and others, in detail, the things which took place in the battle from its beginning to its end." Dr. Aaron Dexter says, from memoranda written at the time, that he was informed by the officers at Ward's quarters the day after the battle, that Putnam had command of all the troops that were sent down over-night, and that might be ordered there the next day. Col. Bancroft, the distinguished captain in the redoubt, says he was at the laying-out of the works by Putnam, and that the rail breastwork was formed and lined under the direction of Putnam. John Boyle, Esq. of Boston, who was aide-de-camp to Gov. Hancock, in the expedition to Rhode Island, writes in his Diary, 16th June, 1775: "Gen. Putnam, with a detachment of about one thousand of the American forces, went from Cambridge, and began an intrenchment on an eminence below Bunker Hill." Col. Samuel Ward, of Rhode Island, then a captain in the army at Roxbury, writes, 20th June: "Putnam had a sore battle on Saturday." Ethan Clarke writes to Capt. Ward, "We hear that Putnam is defeated, and Dr. Warren slain." The most astonishing inadvertence of the author, though mere inadvertence we believe, is his publishing two pages out of Rivington's Gazette of 3d August, 1775, and never hinting, that in the same paper of 29th June, 1775, it is stated that "Putnam on the evening of the 16th inst. took possession of Bunker Hill, and began an intrenchment;" and this extract from Rivington was mentioned in a publication of ours, which he had among our documents. Josiah Cleveland's* deposition says he was of Putnam's regiment; went on the night of the 16th, Putnam at their head, who with others directed the works, and ordered the Connecticut and some Massachu-

* Of Canterbury. All the names we give are of the highest respectability: from their residences any one may inquire.

setts troops to make the breastwork at the rail-fence. Abner Allen,* of the same regiment, in his deposition, says he went on the night before the battle; Putnam was then and there called general, and acted as such. Major Daniel Jackson, 16th June, 1775, then a sergeant in the artillery, entered in his Diary, "Gen. Putnam with the army went to intrench on Bunker Hill." Trevett, senior captain of the artillery, the day of the battle, inquired officially of Maj. Gridley, then in command of all the artillery at Cambridge, and whose father was inferior to no one in the councils of war, "Who had the command of the troops?" and was informed by him, "Gen. Putnam." "Then there is nothing to fear," he observed at the time. He consequently applied to Putnam for orders, and received them. We have mentioned Putnam's command over three regiments from different provinces; and that, while "Gen. Ward was at Roxbury, Gen. Putnam was commander-in-chief" at Cambridge. Gen. Dearborn,† who was in the battle, represents Putnam as the authorized commander. Our next witness is the Rev. Jos. Thaxter, of Edgarton, who, in his letter A.D. 1818, says, "On the evening of the 16th June, Col. Prescott and Col. Bridge, with their regiments, under the direction of Gen. Putnam, took possession of Breed's Hill, and threw up a fort or intrenchment." We have looked in vain into the author's book for the name of Thaxter, that most venerable and interesting old man eloquent, and minister of the Most High, who, at the time of the battle, was chaplain in the army, and, while the battle raged, was wrestling with the Lord in prayer for victory; and, in 1825, with head as white and heart as unsullied as the driven snow, appeared again on the battle-field at the jubilee, and laying of the corner-stone for the monument, to bear up to the throne of grace the thanks of the hundred thousand who were present, for the very success that he had prayed for in '75. The author has devoted twenty-two pages to this jubilee and

* Of Killingley.

† His pamphlet generally, especially page 13.

monument, without one syllable to spare for the patriotism, eloquence, and unction of this most interesting relic of olden time, or for the mention of any religious service whatsoever on the occasion. He dwells on Webster's eloquent address to the sovereign people, without the slightest notice of any address to the Sovereign of the universe. The neglect of all religious service on the occasion will be considered, by all those who give credit to the author's history, as a serious imputation on our national character.

All this perfectly decisive testimony of Putnam's command is fully confirmed by the whole of his conduct during the day after he left Gen. Ward at dawn, who promised to send on a reinforcement. The breastwork at the rail-fence was built under Putnam's orders by the Connecticut and a few Massachusetts troops, though Frothingham does not give him the credit of it. He acknowledges it was built by Knowlton and the troops under him, and that Judge Grosvenor says Gen. Putnam placed them there. Adj.-Gen. Keyes, then lieutenant in Grosvenor's company, says the same. Col. Putnam's memoir states that his father placed them there, and ordered them to make the best preparation in their power for defence. Col. Bancroft and Mr. Josiah Cleveland,* as mentioned before, and Messrs. Aaron Smith† and William Low,‡ all of them present and in the battle, say expressly Putnam built it; and Low adds, Putnam took a rail on his shoulder, and ordered every man to do the same and build the breastwork. Greater service than this was never performed by Putnam for his country, nor greater service by him or any one at Bunker Hill. There were ingenuity, knowledge of position, and generalship in it, that have secured for him immortal honor, and the warmest gratitude of all his countrymen to the latest posterity. Without this defence, the overwhelming force of the enemy would have flanked, surrounded, and vanquished our ill-equipped troops instantly. There was scarcely a regiment, corps, or individual of the army, that Putnam did not personally

* Of Canterbury and Oswego. † Shrewsbury. ‡ Gloucester.

command, direct, or encourage. The reinforcements not arriving, he galloped back to Ward's quarters to obtain them. He ordered Doolittle's regiment* to go on at nine o'clock; ordered Stark's regiment to the lines, and reserved a part of it to intrench on Bunker Hill; led on Woodbridge's and Brewer's regiments; ordered Gardner's to build intrenchments on Bunker Hill; he ordered the companies of Little's regiment to their posts; and Ford's company of Bridge's regiment he ordered to draw Callender's deserted cannon to the line. Ford, though no submissive man, obeyed with the greatest reluctance, his company being infantry, and Putnam fired the pieces himself; some of the soldiers exclaiming that he made a lane, others a furrow, through the enemy. He beat, cut, and thrust with his sword a number of the soldiers who were backward and cowardly, broke his sword over a dastardly officer of Gerrish's regiment, and compelled Capt. Callender to do his duty by threatening him with instant death. During the raging of the battle, frothing at the mouth from his vociferations, and his horse covered with foam, he was galloping from end to end of the line, encouraging, directing, and commanding everybody. My townsman Bagley, who was fighting at the time at the breastwork, and others, say, in their simple language, "he had a very encouraging look." In the language of one of Shakspeare's characters, —

> "He outfaced the brow of bragging horror;
> So that inferior men, who borrow their behavior
> From the great, grew great by his example,
> And put on the spirit of dauntless resolution."

And we say the same of Prescott. When Putnam could no longer prevent the retreat of his troops, he was one of the last in the rear. He told Whittemore, an old companion of the former war, he would rally again directly, as he attempted to do at his slight intrenchments on Bunker Hill, where

* Letter of Capt. Holden, of Leicester.

he obstinately remained till even the Leonidas company of Charlestown, and Trevett's noble corps, left him alone. But, even then, Gen. Putnam it was who saved the honor of his country, as he had already secured for her all the advantages of victory in the battle, by rallying his troops again on Prospect Hill within cannon-shot of the enemy, who did not dare to follow him; and he made a drawn battle of it.

Seventy-five years since, the Battle of Bunker Hill was fought. Who the commander was has ever since remained a mystery. Maj.-Gen. Ward was the commander-in-chief of the army at Cambridge; Maj.-Gen. Warren, the next; Brig.-Gen. Putnam, the third in command; and Col. Prescott, another officer of the army. Gen. Ward, from headquarters, ordered the preparations for the battle, and the general movements and disposition of the troops during the day. But, from want of staff officers, he was unable to ascertain or to direct the particular movements and manœuvres of the troops during the day. He was the commander of the general movements out of the field. Had Napoleon, with his numerous staff, been in Ward's place, history, without hesitation, would have recorded him the commander. Warren* was on the field, and, notwithstanding he declined to issue any orders, was authorized so to do whenever he pleased. His situation was nearly identical with that of the admiral, who declined giving any orders to his fleet, and merely directed that "every commander of a ship should kill his own bird." Warren, then, was the authorized, and for many years the supposed commander, as he was the distinguished hero, martyr, and volunteer of the battle. Gen. Putnam was the actual, and, on Warren's declining, the authorized commander of Bunker Hill Battle. He was "the bright particular star," to which, during all the storm and tempest of the battle, every eye was turned for guidance and

* Warren was at Ward's quarters; and, on the British coming out, Ward called him from his bed, as he promised to do, to go to Bunker Hill without any known restriction.

for victory. Col. Prescott* was commander at Bunker Hill the night before the battle, and the next day till Gen. Putnam came on with the reinforcements; and, during the battle, the commander at the redoubt. He erected his works with his detachment of one thousand men, under a sheet of fire from the enemy like a volcano, and defended them afterwards most heroically to the latest moment of desperation. He immortalized his name. There were, then, four who in some sense participated in the command of Bunker Hill Battle; hence the multiplied mistakes on the subject. It may be equally impossible to demonstrate who was exclusively the commander, as to discover the author of Junius, or birthplace of Homer. It was our duty not the less to make the attempt; as we have done with the greatest diffidence, considering it a forlorn hope.

* The author says, Judge Prescott's understanding and belief was, that the order to his father was in writing, — a very natural supposition for that eminent lawyer; but Ward had no adjutant-general to make out orders. His order to Col. Scammans on the 17th June was verbal: "Go where the fighting is." And that to Prescott on the 16th was probably not more formal, or in writing: it could be only, "Go where the intrenching is." (See Appendix.)

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

PAGE 7.

ACCORDING to Hon. Jos. Allen, late of Worcester, Samuel Adams, the proscribed patriot, said, "I have heard some people find fault with Gen. Ward, for intrenching on Breed's Hill, so near the enemy, without any fortifications in their rear; but the world does not know how much that man is to be justified for so doing; for he had secret intelligence from Boston, by means of spies, that the British were about to take possession of Dorchester Heights; and, to divert them from their object, a close approach to the enemy was made by intrenching on Breed's Hill, which had the desired effect, until the provincials could take possession of Dorchester Heights."

PAGE 12.

Col. Sargent was born at Salem, in 1745, but resided in early life at Cape Ann, and was rugged as the rocky mountains there. From his continual intercourse, by sea, between the Cape and the Capital, he acquired the additional roughness and hardihood of the mariner, and was not mollified by his fierce disputes with the government and tories in Boston. His schooling in the tented field lent the last finish to his character: he was a perfect Ironsides, and loved fighting as he loved his eyes. Learning from his brother, who was a tory, that he was proscribed by Gov. Hutchinson, he made his escape into New Hampshire, where he raised a

regiment, to repay the governor's compliment, by assisting to blockade Gov. Gage. When Washington departed for New York, Sargent remained at Boston under Gen. Ward, who, Sargent says, knowing his opinion of him, placed him as far off as he could, in command of the castle and islands. Though the British had been driven off, he contrived to find fighting, which he thus describes : —

" Early in April, on Fast Day, while we were going to meeting, an alarm gun was fired from the Castle. I repaired to Long Wharf, and manned my barge with forty men. Proceeding down, I observed a ship and three schooners making for Shirley Point, and immediately proceeded to Pudding Point Channel, and took charge of piloting her through the Narrows. But Mr. Knox and Capt. D. Martin coming on board, Knox being the branch pilot, I gave up my command, and in a few moments he ran the ship on a spit of sand, which I cautioned him of. We then collected all the boats, and loaded with powder from the ship, and sent them to town. There were then lying in Nantasket Road, the ' Rainbow,' of fifty guns ; ' Dawson,' of fourteen ; and a schooner, tender to the ' Rainbow.' They made no attempt to succor the ship during the day ; but I expected they would in the night, and warned Capt. Mugford and the other captains to be very vigilant. I left on board the ship a captain and two subalterns, with forty men, and returned to my quarters. In the night, the British attempted to retake the ship, or destroy her. They came with five boats full of men, and the largest laid the ship alongside. Credit is due to Daniel Malcom, who threw a rope over the boat's mainmast, and hauled her in till her halyards could be seized by those on board the ship ; by which the boat was filled and sunk, and sixty men were put to their paddles, most of whom were drowned. A heavy fire from our soldiers obliged them to make a shameful retreat. They fired a great number of shot at *us* without effect. She was a most valuable prize, being fully loaded with military stores. We were very short of them, and Lord North could not have done us a greater service."

The next day, Gen. Ward inquired whether Sargent could drive the enemy from Nantasket. He informed him, that his cannon were too small ; but, Ward wishing him to make the experiment, he repaired in the night to Long Island with three hundred men, erected breastworks before light, and in the morning saluted the

"Rainbow" with a shot, which struck her on the quarter, carrying away some of her upper works; and excited so great a panic in the enemy, that they instantly towed out, and, the wind springing up, sailed off with the utmost despatch. Sargent, satisfied with their movements, was too prudent to betray his weakness by firing a second time. Crowned with these victories, in July, 1776, he left Boston for New York, with the only full regiment then formed, numbering, officers and men, seven hundred and twenty-seven. And, by December, he had used up this regiment, by continual and desperate fighting, at Harlem Heights, Fort Washington, White Plains, and by casualties; one hundred and ninety-five of them only were left, to tell the melancholy fate of their comrades. So ardent was Sargent's patriotism, that, many years after the peace, being in Boston on Sunday, he went to church with his half-brother, Daniel Sargent, Esq. and took his seat, before he perceived that his own brother, from Halifax, who had been a tory and refugee, was in the same pew with him. The moment he discovered this, he seized his three-cornered hat, and stalked out of church; vociferating afterwards, that the same roof should never cover such a —— tory as his brother was, and himself. He died 1828.

PAGE 18.

The following description of Putnam was not intended for publication; but that lends it the highest interest. Judge Dana, a senator of the United States from Maine, was a grandson of Putnam, and remarks in his letter, 1818, that he had just been to visit his aunt Waldo, Gen. Putnam's daughter; and then gives the following description of the general: —

"In his person, for height, about the middle size; very erect; thickset, muscular, and firm in every part. His countenance was open, strong, and animated; the features of his face large, well-proportioned to each other, and to his whole frame; his teeth fair and sound till death. His organs and senses were all exactly fitted for a warrior; he heard quickly, saw to an immense distance; and, though he sometimes stammered in conversation, his voice was remarkably heavy, strong, and commanding. Though facetious and dispassionate in private, when animated in the heat of battle, his countenance was fierce and terrible, and his voice like

thunder. His whole manner was admirably calculated to inspire his soldiers with courage and confidence, and his enemy with terror. The faculties of his mind were not inferior to those of his body; his penetration was acute, his decision rapid, yet remarkably correct; and the more desperate his situation, the more collected and undaunted. With the courage of a lion, he had a heart that melted at the sight of distress; he could never witness suffering in any human being, without becoming a sufferer himself; even the operation of blood-letting has caused him to faint. In viewing the field of battle, his distress was exquisite, until he had afforded friend or foe all the relief in his power. Once after a battle, on examining a bullet-wound through the head of a favorite officer, Capt. Whiting, who died on the field, he fainted, and was taken up for dead. Martial music roused him to the highest pitch; while solemn, sacred music set him into tears. In his disposition he was open and generous, almost to a fault; he never disguised; and in the social relations of life he was never excelled."

PAGE 29.

One of the most magnificent monuments that ever bore the name of any man, and which will transmit the name of Warren, in grateful and glorious remembrance, down to the latest posterity, has been erected in Boston Harbor. Fort Warren, for strength, grandeur, and scientific perfection, is one of the masterpieces of military art; and it will be highly gratifying to all the countrymen of Col. Thayer, — that most amiable, scientific, and distinguished engineer, by whom it was constructed, — that his name will be for ever so honorably and deservedly associated with that of Warren. Both were born in the vicinity of Boston.

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If we may be excused for speaking from a very slight experience, we should say, there is no reason to suppose that any of Ward's orders to his officers, on the occasion of the battle, were in writing. In 1814, when the British forces, freed from European service, were pouring into Canada, and apprehensions were entertained that they would make their way into our country, we joined the army under Gen. Izard, on the Champlain frontier, as one of

the Massachusetts volunteers, and served in his staff through the campaign as topographical engineer. The general was soon ordered to the Niagara frontier, to save Gen. Brown from Drummond's superior force, which we found posted on the north bank of the Chippewa River, and with very formidable fortifications along the southern shore likewise. Gen. Izard, finding that the enemy's position was unassailable in front, was desirous of discovering whether the British fleet, with the large frigate they had been building, which was to give them the mastery over Commodore Chauncey, was out on Lake Ontario, so as to prevent him from getting on the enemy's flank or rear. To gain this information, he ordered me, and not in writing, to go with a small detachment of infantry across the Niagara River in a boat, and proceed to the vicinity of Lake Ontario, to obtain the requisite information. That region was abandoned to the enemy, and deserted by all the Americans, excepting a few men who frequented it occasionally, to look after their property, though their fine crops were rotting on the ground. We embarked on the Canada side of the Niagara; and, as we neared the opposite shore, we were challenged by a body of musketeers demanding who we were. Neither party had any uniform, or other badge of nationality; and as they, being on *terra firma*, had us at a great disadvantage, my tactic was to gain time, while we were fast approaching the shore. But as I was only a soldier "by the book," and very little of that, I was confounded with my situation. Having often pondered on Maj. André's egregious indiscretion, in disclosing to his captors who he was, in place of claiming to be an American, which would have insured his safety, I was disposed to avoid his mistake, and pass our party off for English. But no simile goes on all-fours. In our case, had I guessed wrong as to their character, they would have responded with their guns. To gain time, I cried out, "Friends!" but that trick did not take; their muskets were levelled at us, and they swore they would fire, if we did not answer them directly. We were prepared for them, and I was compelled to show our colors. I cried out, "Americans!" when they hailed us, "Brothers!" to our great delight. We soon gained the information we were in pursuit of, and had the melancholy though magnificent view, with our glass, of the British fleet in the offing, on Lake Ontario. We reported these unpleasant tidings to Gen. Izard; and his whole plan of campaign was frustrated, and the war virtually over. The

general, in his dilemma, consulted one of the most distinguished officers in the army, and as great a military genius probably as the world has produced, — young Col. M'Cree, of the engineers. On our arrival at Fort Erie, we found him in Gen. Brown's staff; and he had really been the principal staff on which Brown had leaned to gain his brilliant success on the Niagara frontier. Gen. Izard was desirous of reaping the same advantage from M'Cree, who advised to a very ingenious and scientific expedient to extricate the general from his embarrassment. It was to construct a floating bridge at some distance above the enemy, on our side of the Chippewa, with one end fastened on our side, while the rest of the bridge was to be floated off into the river; and the other end, when the current had carried it to the opposite shore, to be attached there, for our army to pass over. But Gen. Brown, once relieved by Izard from Drummond's superior force, seemed not at all disposed to assist him to gain any laurels in return. There was a marked jealousy and coldness between those officers, that precluded any joint enterprise of theirs from succeeding.

Brig.-Gen. Totten, now head of the engineer department, was a young engineer in Gen. Izard's staff, and gained his first laurels at Plattsburgh. The forts he built there would have done him honor, even had he then gained his present high advancement. With the most unmanageable material, the sand of Plattsburgh, he contrived, with the aid of carpentry, to construct his forts with a skill, science, and ingenuity that would have rendered them impregnable, Gen. Izard declared, against the overwhelming force of Prevost, even if it had not been crippled by the naval victory of the gallant Com. M'Donough. When we left Plattsburgh for Fort Erie, Totten remained behind to test and fight his own works, which he did with great *éclat*. Winstanley, the gallant civil engineer, who bravely dared to prove his own light-house against as fierce an elemental strife as ever raged, fell a noble sacrifice to an inscrutable decree of Providence; but Totten, more fortunate, found his works were not to be subdued by man.

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The author thinks we are mistaken as to the number of cannon belonging to the corps of artillery at Cambridge. Our informants, in 1818, were Col. Popkin and Capt. Trevett, captains in the

corps; and they are so well known yet, from their high character, and the public stations they held, that we need say no more of their testimony. Capt. Trevett will be recollected as the distinguished officer in the battle, and for a great number of years commander of the revenue cutter at Boston. Col. Popkin was born at Boston, of Welsh descent. He had been in Paddock's corps, was a major in Greaton's regiment, and in the battle of White Plains; in the engagements at Saratoga as Aid to Gen. Lincoln; afterwards lieutenant-colonel of artillery under Crane, and left the army at the peace a colonel. He was a custom-house officer under Gen. Lincoln, in 1789, and remained in office till his decease, 1827, aged eighty-four. He was father of the learned, beloved, and respected Professor John S. Popkin, of Harvard University, for more than half a century past dear to all the friends of that institution, and whose sermons would do honor to any man.

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Gen. Burbeck, who was with the army at the time of the battle, says, the following is an accurate description of Col. Prescott: — "Figure to yourself a man of sixty, six feet high, and somewhat round-shouldered, sunburned from exposure, with coarse leather shoes, and blue stockings, coarse home-spun cloth small-clothes, a red waistcoat, and a calico banian, answering to the sack worn at the present day, a three-cornered hat with a red cockade, and a bandoleer, or belt, with a sword hung high up under the left arm. You will say that it is a complete caricature; but such was the fact, and such was the dress of the heroes who fought at the Battle of Bunker Hill."

"On the day of the battle," Burbeck says, "Gen. Putnam rode between Charlestown and Cambridge without a coat, in his shirt sleeves, and an old white felt hat on, to report to Gen. Ward, and to consult on farther operations."*

* June 15, '75, a committee of Mass. Congress report Little's regiment to have eight companies, 509 men, 382 of them with bayonets, and seven of the companies at Cambridge. Little's orderly book is extant.

The British fired without aim, holding their guns below the shoulder, as, by reason of the recoil, they did in our war of 1812.

We conclude, as we commenced, with expressing our belief in the intentional honor and honesty of the author.

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